After the Call: How to Keep the Momentum Going

CRITICAL MOMENTS

Doing an assessment after each sales call is valuable for two reasons:

1. An assessment helps you to measure the actual hard data of the call – that is, to understand what information has been successfully exchanged and what still needs to be exchanged.

2. An assessment helps you to judge the 'soft' interpersonal data of the call – to evaluate how you interacted with the customer and how you should alter your interaction in the future.

To use the assessment effectively, you need to sit down as soon as possible after the sales call and run through three distinct but interrelated processes.

1. Review

If your manager asked you how it went, what do you say? "It went well, the client seems really interested?" Or "It's hard to say what, but something's wrong." Either way, what do those answers mean? The purpose of the review process is to look more closely at the specific elements that led you to feel okay or pretty good or not sure. Some of the questions you need to ask yourself may include:

a. Did I clearly state the Valid Business Reason at the outset?

b. Did I ask at least one good New Information question?

c. Did I remember to stay silent in the meeting and let the customer talk? Based on what the customer shared with me about what he want to fix, accomplish or avoid, did the information I gave him clearly highlight my Unique Strengths to help him resolve those issues?

2. Sort

Let's face it, there will be sales situations where you can't achieve a Win-Win (a win for both you and your customer). Try as you might, a solid match between what you have and what your customer needs simply doesn't exist. Do you walk away? Maybe. It's still a matter of discretion and will be based on the information you have currently. The best sales professionals may walk out of a no-win situation but will keep an eye on the prospect for future opportunities that may open up some months, or years down the line.

3. Feed Forward

You've just reviewed and analysed all the data you gathered from your previous sales call. Unless that was absolutely the final time you're ever going to sit down with the prospect, use the information you have to improve your next call with that person. And since mutual commitment is what's going to move the process forward, identify what the next steps you will ask your prospect to make in your next call. Depending on where he is in the buying cycle, this may either be additional information that he wasn't able to provide you initially, or if his organization is farther along in the cycle, request for him to arrange a meeting with someone who can give the final approval to the sale.

The concepts in this month's Sales Performance Tips were adapted from Miller Heiman's Conceptual Selling® program.
To improve your ability to effectively pursue sales opportunities, talk to Stephen Newman about Conceptual Selling® from Critical Moments on:

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